

POGROMS IN RUSSIA SANCTIONED BY THE GENERAL STAFF, IS CHARGE

By HERMAN BERNSTEIN,
Editor of "The Day."

LETTERS from a special correspondent of THE SUN and the Day which were published last week contained an account of his observations in the course of his travels and investigations in the Russian provinces and Galicia for the past four months. He charged that the Russian Government has systematically organized and encouraged the Jewish pogroms during the war as an apology for various military defeats, that anti-Semitism is being spread in war time in the armies and among the masses, that the Polish population has been incited against the Jews and that certain elements of the Polish population have in turn been inciting the Russian troops against the Jews, that entire Jewish communities have been mercilessly driven from their home towns by the authorities, that thousands upon thousands of Jews have been plundered, outraged, hanged or shot and that a libelous and cruel legend is being circulated widely to the effect that the Jews are betraying Russia to the German Government—this at a time when more than 400,000 Jewish soldiers, constituting an army larger than the entire army of Belgium, are shedding their blood for Russia.

Prince Paul Dolgoroukov in a statement in the Russkaja Tedomost, one of Russia's leading newspapers, said: "Hundreds of thousands of Jews are shedding their blood for the grandeur of Russia, and in the meantime they are deprived of the riches of which no Russian subject can be deprived otherwise than by a court and as a punishment for a crime." Many thousands of wounded Jews are now scattered all over Russia, including cities outside the pale. Their relatives cannot be with them, or even visit them for a short time. And if a Jewish soldier dies his relatives are deprived of the possibility of paying him his last tribute, or else they must violate the law and reside secretly without being registered.

That the higher Russian authorities are directly responsible for circulating the stories and legends about Jewish "treason" may be gathered from the following document issued on December 2, 1914, by Gen. Bobir:

AN ORDER TO THE ARMIES IN THE PORTUGAL REGION

PORTUGAL REGION, NOVEMBER 27, 1914. No. 55.

The German newspapers have published articles in which the Jews are incited to take part in the Russian army. In the Russian Jews the Germans have met their reliable allies, who, aside from furnishing them with provisions, are the best and often disinterested ones ready for any service if such service is detrimental to the interests of Russia. In the victory of the German army, the Jews see their emancipation from the yoke of the czar and from oppression on the part of the Poles. Similar information is continually reaching us from the troops.

In order to safeguard the armies against the injurious activity of the Jewish population, the Commander in Chief of the Russian army has given instructions to take hostages from the Jewish population at the time of occupation of certain points, warning the population that in the event of a treacherous act on the part of any of the inhabitants of that place, not only during the period of our occupation, but even after we have evacuated it, such hostages will be put to death, and that in case of need these orders should be executed.

While occupying such places it is necessary to make a thorough investigation in order that we may convince ourselves whether there are no underground points for wireless telegraphy, for signals, for pigeon stations, for subterranean telegraphs and so forth, dealing with all persons having any connection with such arrangements with the army of the law.

Inquiry Telegram of Gen. Oranovsky, No. 4432.

Signatures: Commander of the fortified region, General of Cavalry, Boma.

Thus is the pogrom agitation officially spread through the Russian army, practically sanctioning military attacks upon the Jews, wholesale executions and wholesale expulsions.

Further details of the tragedy of the Jewish people in Russia during this war are presented below. They were furnished by the same correspondent whose letters were printed last week.

By a Field Correspondent.

About six months ago the Russian military authorities carried out the first general Jewish expulsion. In three days the entire Jewish population was driven out from Skernewicz, Grodzisk and several other towns in that vicinity. Gen. Scheidegger was the commander to attempt such an experiment, for up to that time none of the "brilliant" Russian Generals had dared to break this form of vengeance upon the Jews for the victories of the Germans.

The effect of this experiment was striking. The civil authorities, the representatives of the anti-Semitic Russian Red Cross, various Russian men of prominence, who were then in Warsaw, saw for the first time with their own eyes the terrible results of the inhuman procedure of the Russian General. They were astounded. The press opinion was aroused. The press did not upon the outrage.

It seemed that every one had been stirred to protest in one form or other. The Jewish population received the impression that the experiment would never be repeated to again and that the barbarians would be afraid to enter cities on the battlefield.

They thought, but only to the end of the past year, when the expulsions began, which are still continued. Day by day they grow greater and more fearful. They have ruined not less than half a million Russian and Polish Jews. And the end of this vast, dark, and catastrophic is not yet in sight. Jewish history has had more than one opportunity to recount overwhelming catastrophes, but we may be certain that the catastrophes of to-day and of to-morrow have never had an equal.

During the month of December the Russian army met with a series of strategic defeats. January brought

Terrible Picture Drawn by Field Correspondent of Vengeance on the Jews Following Von Hindenburg's Dash on Warsaw—Baseless Spy Stories the Excuse



Photo by Paul Thompson.
Jewish peasants inspecting the ruin of their home in the wake of Von Hindenburg's army.

The Russians new unheard of losses. In the General Staff of the army, as it now appears, there were whole circles of active gendarme officers as well as ex-officers who served the German army. To-day all Petrograd and Moscow Jews see their emancipation from the yoke of the czar and from oppression on the part of the Poles. Similar information is continually reaching us from the troops.

The public knows that the spying was done by officers, Russian officers, and by them alone. It is very evident that with the present organization of the huge armies of millions, only officers can serve the enemy through treachery. The technique of present day military tactics and war maneuvers is so complex, it demands such intimate knowledge of and intercourse with the higher grades of the army, that it is utterly absurd to think for a moment that a Jew from a Polish village could be a spy.

Honest Russian officers admit that it would be impossible not only for an uninformed Polish Jew but even for a well informed inhabitant of a large city to notice and understand the difference between a brigade of infantry and a division, between a division and a corps, between an ordinary field cannon and a howitzer.

Russian officers themselves ridicule the accusations that the Polish Jews give signals to the Germans. The present signal system in every army is so technically involved and so minutely devised that only the most skillful specialists can have the slightest conception of its operation.

And notwithstanding the fact that it is public knowledge and common talk that there are spies in the General Staff, the Russians have fallen upon the Jews.

When an expulsion of a quarter of a million Jews is to be organized some motive must be found to serve as an official explanation. But there was no semblance of a reason. The Jews were not only fulfilling their duties to their country in every way—on the battlefield and at home—but were devoting themselves with particular zeal to relief work.

It is sufficient to say that the Jewish Flying Relief Corps of Warsaw was one of the best at the front near Warsaw, that the military authorities on several occasions gave it written official recognition and that its work was not only splendid but in some cases heroic. Here is the most striking example of this heroic work:

When the Russian army toward the end of December suffered a crushing defeat at the front near Warsaw and on its retreat crossed the River Buzra in this Jewish Relief Corps was at work in the district which was centered in the oft mentioned railroad station, Sachatshew. The day came when the German artillery began to fire upon the station itself. The staff and the army were already on the other side of the River Buzra. But a small portion of the Russian cavalry with the artillery remained on this side, thus affording the army an opportunity to retreat with more or less order.

The earth was trembling from the German shot and shell. Cannon were being fired and bombs bursting on all sides. All the relief corps, all the auxiliary hospitals, every corps of the Russian Red Cross, were that morning on the other side of the river. Only the group of sixteen Jewish student relief workers remained and rescued the last wounded Russian soldiers.

I shall never forget that morning. All had fled. The din was growing more and more deafening. The rain fell in torrents. We were drenched. And it was bitter cold. Now a shrapnel tore into the last car of the relief train. Everywhere fires were raging. And they, the dark young heroes with

the dark eyes and Jewish noses, were working with feverish energy. I watched them. I was waiting to see them flee. Only one representative of the Russian Red Cross had stayed behind with them, Count Tolstoy, who died two weeks later of typhoid in Warsaw. Only after the last wounded Russian soldier had been carried off did the Jewish young men leave. The attack of the German artillery was so terrific that the Jewish Relief Corps could not enter their automobile. They just scattered on the field and ran blindly for several versts.

I am recounting this incident which I myself witnessed only as an example of Jewish loyalty.

But this was of no avail. "They" needed the Jewish victim. And they found him.

As far back as the beginning of December the public learned that an order regarding the Jews had been issued in the army. It was not long before its purpose became known. The Russians had suffered a new, overwhelming defeat and were seeking a scapegoat. They grasped at a shadow. They found "the guilty."

In the order of the Commander in Chief on the northwest front the accusations against the Jews began with the statement: "German newspapers admit that the Jews in Russia are friendly to the Germans and render them assistance."

And, since he believes the German newspapers and has received from his Generals "further proofs" which confirm the reports of the German newspapers, the Commander in Chief directs that whenever they find the slightest grounds to suspect Jews of treachery the most prominent men of the Jewish communities shall be arrested and hanged without ceremony and the cities shall be destroyed.

The Russian Generals took full advantage of this command. Scores of the best Jews were killed and hanged. I shall not go into details, for these atrocities on the part of the Russian army are well known. But these death penalties were only a sort of prelude. Rumors began to spread, which "calm" people tried to explain as results of hysteria. There was talk of plans to expel all the Jews from Poland, of driving the Jews out of Warsaw and packing them off to Siberia, and other curious rumors.

And there in the army, where every outcast understands that his existence and his position depend upon his finding the real "enemy," there in the army, where the head of the staff, Commander in Chief, Gen. Yanushkevitch, sits and gathers special libelous material and prepares himself for the war against the Jews, there they stirred up sentiment for the Grand Duke Nicholas Nicholasievitch, who has always been hostile to the Jews. They did everything to incite one another.

In order that you may understand how this is done in Russia, even in times of war, let me relate a short but very striking incident:

It was in the middle of the cold, rainy Polish winter. In the army about Warsaw a terrible epidemic of cholera suddenly broke out. In one community every day from four to five hundred people would succumb to the disease. They began to fight against the epidemic as they fight against everything in Russia. The well and the sick, the cured and the newly stricken victims, the dead and the living—all were thrown together. A large part of the army was thus destroyed and in that sense they won in the struggle against the epidemic. At the same time efforts were made

to feed the impoverished civil population. Many stations were opened where tea and bread were distributed free.

In the city of Zshirordov the authorities noticed that the Jews did not frequent these stations. They appealed to the rabbi to command the Jews to go and drink tea there. He pointed out that the tea was not kosher. Then the authorities discovered that tea is not meat and hence the most pious Jews may drink tea which Christians prepare.

This message was meant to give the impression that the Jews had already made active protests and demonstrations. The report caused indignation. "To think that Jews could forget that Russia is in the midst of war—it is very evident that they wish Russia to suffer a new defeat!" people said.

By such means every effort was made to create adverse sentiment regarding the conduct of the Jews. It is interesting to note that not far from Zshirordov was a little village where the inhabitants suffered from

hunger and typhoid. Almost all of them began to succumb. Finally the authorities realized that the new epidemic might attack the soldiers too. So they established a kitchen to provide 250 portions of food daily.

Among the Christians and soldiers 100 portions were distributed. The remaining 150 were thrown out every day. Not a piece of bread, not a drop of hot water was offered to the hungry Jews. Every day they threw away quantities of food and would not give a crust to the Jews, who were dying of hunger.

They kept creating sentiment against the Jews and inciting each other more and more. In the meantime the great blow came, which brought the Russian army nearer to Warsaw, on the other side of the Buzra. The retreating Russian army made a pogrom in the city of Sachatshew. Only a few hundred passed from the spot where the Jewish relief corps but a few days before had worked self-sacrificingly, calling forth from all so much admiration and accomplishing so much out of sheer devotion. The Russian soldiers were permitted to plunder a city where there were some 1,300 Jewish families.

The soldiers broke into the houses of the Jews, stole their belongings, ruined their property and beat them brutally. Ten Jews were hanged because they were accused of helping the Germans. Four Jews were arrested because they would not allow the plunderers to enter their houses. They were carried off and a day later their dead bodies were brought back and hung up on the doors of their houses, where they remained for two days.

An old Jew of 70 told me the following story on the second day after they brought him to Warsaw and freed him:

The soldiers suddenly fell upon us and began to beat us. They tortured us until they were themselves exhausted. Under my very eyes they killed four Jewish young men.



The Grand Duke Nicholas, Commander in Chief of Russia's armies.

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